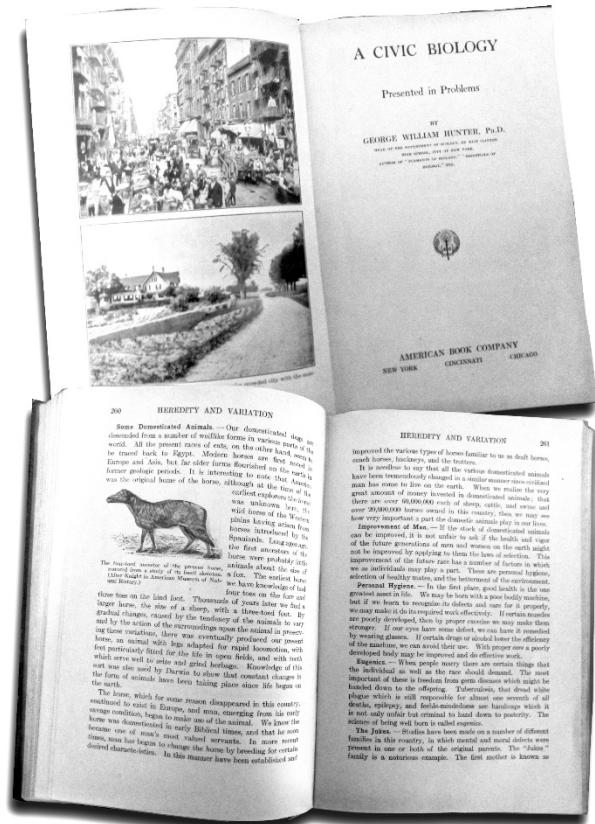


# THE SCOPES MONKEY TRIAL: Eugenics, White Supremacy, & Utopian Socialism

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*“May the son of Charles Darwin send you in his own name one word of warm encouragement.”*  
(Leonard Darwin letter to John Scopes)



The Scopes “Monkey Trials” was nothing more than a publicity stunt. The beneficiary of this stunt was the international eugenics movement. Some of the influential figures behind the impetus remain well known. What is not common knowledge is their ties to the eugenics lobby, and, by extension, the explicitly white supremacist views woven into the passages of the book at the center of the controversy. More to the point, it is incredible that this aspect of this famous

trial has not been delved into much. Consider the implications. Several generations of America’s youth were taught the concepts Nazi Germany’s Hitler Youth were schooled in.

The so-called Monkey Trial came about after the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) announced that it would finance a test case challenging the constitutionality of Tennessee’s Butler Act if they could find a teacher willing to act as a defendant. The law, Tenn. HB 185, 1925 specifically provided:

That it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any of the Universities, Normals and all other public schools of the State which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the State, to teach any theory that denies the Story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.

A band of businessmen in Dayton, Tennessee, led by engineer and geologist George Rappleyea, saw this as an opportunity to get publicity for their town. Rappleyea approached one of the small town’s teachers, Mr. Scopes. He pointed out that while the Butler Act prohibited the teaching of human evolution, the State required teachers to use the assigned textbook, “A Civic Biology,” which included a chapter on evolution. Rappleyea argued that teachers were essentially required to break the law.

What historians have failed to mention is just how this book, “A Civic Biology: Presented in Problems,” fully propagated the views of the international eugenics movement. The chapter on how evolution applied to humanity had been written by none other than Charles Benedict Davenport, the head of the Cold Spring Harbor Eugenic Records Office, the epicenter of the American eugenics lobby. While historians have feigned outrage over the alleged disservice of attempting to keep evolution out of the classrooms, they have equally forgotten the one chapter that everyone should have been paying attention to:

**The Races of Man.** -- At the present time there exist upon the earth five races or varieties of man, each very different from the other in instincts, social customs, and, to an extent, in structure. These are the Ethiopian or negro type, originating in Africa; the Malay or brown race, from the islands of the Pacific; The American Indian; the Mongolian or yellow race, including the natives of China, Japan, and the Eskimos; and

finally, the highest type of all, the Caucasians, represented by the civilized white inhabitants of Europe and America. ...

Here were the odious racial hierarchies of the eugenics cult being taught to the American youth. Even worse, this passage of the textbook flirted with the creation of a "master race":

**Improvement of Man.** - If the stock of domesticated animals can be improved, it is not unfair to ask if the health and vigor of the future generations of men and women on the earth might not be improved by applying to them the laws of selection. This improvement of the future race has a number of factors in which we as individuals may play a part. These are personal hygiene, selection of healthy mates, and the betterment of the environment.

**Eugenics.** - When people marry there are certain things that the individual as well as the race should demand. The most important of these is freedom from germ diseases which might be handed down to the offspring. Tuberculosis, syphilis, that dread disease which cripples and kills hundreds of thousands of innocent children, epilepsy, and feeble-mindedness are handicaps which it is not only unfair but criminal to hand down to posterity. The science of being well born is called eugenics.

Of note is the devaluation of human life down to the level of "parasites," a rhetorical tactic later identified as that of Nazi propaganda:

**Parasitism and its Cost to Society.** -- Hundreds of families such as those described above exist today, spreading disease, immorality, and crime to all parts of this country. The cost to society of such families is very severe. **Just as certain animals or plants become parasitic on other plants or animals, these families have become parasitic on society.** They not only do harm to others by corrupting, stealing, or spreading disease, but they are actually protected and cared for by the state out of public money. Largely for them the poorhouse and the asylum exist. They take from society, but they give nothing in return. They are true parasites.

The book then went on to provide the typical eugenic proposals that were part of their international movement:

**The Remedy.** - If such people were lower animals, we would probably kill them off to prevent them from spreading. Humanity will not allow this, but we do have the remedy of separating the sexes in asylums or other places and in various ways preventing intermarriage and the possibilities of perpetuating such a low and degenerate race. Remedies of this sort have been tried successfully in Europe and are now meeting with some success in this country.

**Blood Tells.** - Eugenics shows us, on the other hand, in a study of the families in which are brilliant men and women, the fact that the descendants have received the good inheritance from their ancestors. The following, taken from Davenport's Heredity in Relationship to Eugenics, illustrates how one family has been famous in American History.

Interestingly enough, the word "eugenics" was never used throughout the trial, and in doing so, both the trial failed to address why treating man as an animal was abhorrent. This is certainly curious, as the text of the allegedly violated law placed this issue at the heart of the matter, and demanded it be addressed.

#### CLARANCE DARROW'S "EUGENICS CULT":

In hindsight, the choice of attorneys on both sides sheds light on the evasion of the salient aspects of this actual controversy at hand. The Scopes case was a dream come true for Clarence Darrow. In his autobiography, "The Story of My Life," he admits that as soon as he heard William Jennings Bryan had joined the prosecution team, "at once I wanted to go." On a speaking tour in Richmond at the time, Darrow confided to a friend, "I believe I could bring him down." So irresistible was the chance to battle "the idol of all Morondom" that Darrow felt compelled "for the first, the last, the only time in my life" to volunteer his services in a case. (Pg. 244 – "Story of My Life") The ACLU leadership was decidedly less enthusiastic about Darrow's desire to join in on the publicity stunt. They apparently wanted less of a circus atmosphere to their media circus, and only reluctantly accepted him when John Scopes "insisted on having him as a defender."

The fact that the word "eugenics" and any reference to Charles B. Davenport was never discussed in the Scopes Trial certainly raises eyebrows. Interestingly enough, Darrow, the lawyer defending the

use of Davenport's textbook had very strong opinions against eugenics. Darrow had previously vacillated in his opposition and support for eugenics and euthanasia. However, he wrote an article in the 1925 September to December issue of American Mercury, the same year as the "Monkey Trial," poking fun at and debasing eugenics. The article is vicious, to say the least. It is noteworthy as the timing of its publication leaves no doubt that Darrow had at least begun to write the article while he was defending the use of the Davenport portions of "A Civic Biology." The scant days separating the publication and the end of the trial were too few in the era of manual typesetting and analog print presses for Darrow to have evolved such a bitterly opposed opinion to the side of the trial he defended. Darrow begins with an attack on eugenics:

It is not possible within the limits of this article to show the **utter absurdity** of tracing out any given germ-plasm or part thereof for nine generations, or five, or three. Not only does new blood enter at each generation, but to follow the germ-plasm one must go across, as over the squares in a checker board, and take a blind chance at every one of the infinite cross-roads reached. The laws of heredity are infinitely subtle and uncertain. The laws of social heritage are very much easier to understand.

Darrow rightfully calls to question the eugenic claim that certain habits or diseases are the product of heredity. Science was far along enough to know that personality disorders such as harlotry, licentiousness, pauperism, and idleness were not inherited from one's parents. Syphilis was a disease that could be passed on from one individual to the other, but there was no data proving that it could be passed on from parent to child by hereditary means. Despite the claims of some eugenic statisticians, humanity understood the motivations to commit a crime, and "no biologist would pretend to say that burglary, robbery, arson or murder are inherited in the germ-plasm." The statistics were dubious, and it was clear to contemporaries like Clarence Darrow that the eugenicists were nothing more than political zealots. So, why was this questionable and highly politicized science being taught to America's youth as scientific fact? More to the point, why was Darrow defending the teaching of a scientific concept he regarded as an "utter absurdity"? Darrow concludes by questioning the motivations of

the eugenicists, that social standing had a significant sway in their claims:

Why do eugenists dodge the perfectly obvious facts to bolster up their case for tinkering with the human race? ---- The Jukes in a barren, rocky, isolated community are contrasted in the literature of eugenics with a family in the fertile Connecticut river valley – a family in which a few members having fame were able to pass this heritage to others down the line. Why go out of the way to even infer that the germ-plasm had anything to do with either case?

Of note is the fact that in all its satirical and biting criticism of eugenics the article specifically called out Charles Davenport, the author for the eugenics section of "A Civic Biology," the very book Darrow fought to maintain as part of the school curriculum during the Scopes trial. Clearly, a defense attorney would not want to shine a spotlight on the inflammatory portions of the textbook. This only serves to highlight that Darrow, far from being the champion of the scientific views expounded in the textbook, as he is typically portrayed, can more accurately be described as a media whore seeking out the spotlight even when it meant defending views he thought deleterious to the human condition.

In fact, Darrow wrote more than one article bashing eugenics, and both articles were published just weeks after the Scopes trial concluded. More poignantly, both of these articles appeared in "American Mercury," the magazine by H.L. Mencken, the man who had brought Darrow and Scopes together. Darrow was clearly aware of the connection between the leadership of the eugenics movement and the textbook he was defending. The title of the article he wrote is telling. The article was entitled "The Eugenics Cult":

In the last ten years the reading public has been bombarded by books and articles on eugenics. In the main these articles have set forth a single thesis: that doom hangs over the human race. ---- The good old Mayflower stock is suffering the same unhappy fate as the good old pre-Prohibition liquor. It is being mixed with all sorts of alien and debilitating substances. ---- Quotations from other eminent authorities might be multiplied to show just how far the biological uplifters are willing to go. Their romancing would not be worth discussing were it not for the

fact that the public apparently takes it at its face value. "Aren't these eugenists scientists? And you can't get around scientific law, you know."

It is of note that Darrow considered himself something of an amateur scientist—and boasted of his knowledge of things scientific. "For a lawyer, I was a fairly grounded scientist," he declared in "The Story of My Life." As such, Darrow mocked the claims of the eugenacists from a scientific standpoint:

No; you cannot sort out intelligence by physical symmetry. The workings of heredity are obscure enough in the body; they are hopelessly indefinite in the mind. No eugenists knows anything about breeding for intellect. --- **To talk about breeding for intellect, in the present state of scientific knowledge and data, is nothing short of absurd.** No scientist has ever pretended to advance any theories for breeding intellect; we do not know what intelligence is, much less how to breed it.

Clarence Darrow's tone and choice of insults in the article evidence how strongly he felt about the "Eugenics Cult" he was defending:

Even if human breeding could be so controlled as to produce a race such as the eugenists desire, we might still lose much that is worthwhile. It is hardly possible to breed certain qualities in without breeding others out. I, for one, **am alarmed at the conceit and sureness of the advocates of this new dream. I shudder at their ruthlessness in meddling with life. I resent their egoistic and stern righteousness.** I shrink from their judgment of their fellows. Everyone who passes judgment necessarily assumes that he is right. It seems to me that man can bring comfort and happiness out of life only by tolerance, kindness and sympathy, all of which seem to find no place in the eugenists' creed. **The programme means the absolute violation of what men instinctively feel to be inherent rights.** Organized society shall say who must and must not breed, and establish stern rules for picking out mates.

Darrow aptly points to the unhindered and unchecked corruption that would be invited if this amount of power over people's lives, and the elitist aspect of the eugenics cult:

**The bigoted and the ignorant are very sure of themselves.** No business seems to be too

important or too personal for them to undertake. One of their chief pastimes is the regulation of other people. They are willing to do anything to others that to them seems important. To compel all others to adopt their own views and ways of living is their aim. In fact, one of their chief sources of comfort and pleasure is making others unhappy. How safe would it be for the human race and the comfort of the individual units if the production of human beings were left in their hands? ---- Those in power would inevitably direct human breeding in their own interests. — At the present time it would mean that big business would create a race in its own image. At any time, it would mean with men, as it does with animals, that breeding would be controlled for the use and purpose of the powerful and unintelligent."

Darrow's article is a testament to his scientific and analytical mind, and it is the clarity of thought he displayed in the two articles he published that make his media whoring at the Scopes Trial that much more frustrating. Taking the amount of time it took to prepare a publication for press prior to the advent of the computer, it is almost certain that Mr. Darrow was writing the article while defending Scopes. Shortly after arriving in Tennessee in July 1925, Darrow would famously proclaim, "Scopes isn't on trial; civilization is on trial." If he would have been sincere about this sentiment; if the entirety of human civilization was on trial, then he should not have taken the case.

#### **WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN, TWO FACES OF THE SAME COIN:**

As was the case with Clarence Darrow, William Jennings Bryan's true political opinions have been severely skewed by posterity, and a quick search into his life outside of the Scopes' Monkey Trial reveals just how much. William Jennings Bryan died the month following the Scope's Monkey Trial. Since then, this political figure has had a dual-identity. When he is remembered in the context of the Scopes' Trial, Bryan is portrayed as the bastion of conservative politics and traditional ethics. When he is remembered as the three-time Democratic Party presidential candidate, he is lauded as a bastion of left-leaning Progressivism. The two positions ascribed to Bryan are polar opposites and irreconcilable. To understand where

Bryan truly stood all one has to do is consult Bryan's own publications, speeches, and political platforms. Bryan was the Democratic Party presidential candidate in 1896, 1900, and 1908. Copies of past party platforms can be found at the "The American Presidency Project" webpage at the University of California, Santa Barbara:

The portion on immigration in the 1908 Platform begins to reveal that William Jennings Bryan was a devoted member of the "eugenics cult," and that furthermore, he viewed his eugenic stance as intertwined with his domestic policy. As the later political platforms of Bryan's presidential candidacy illustrate, these were enduring convictions:

. . .we are opposed to the admission of Asiatic immigrants who cannot be amalgamated with our population, or whose presence among us would raise a race issue and involve us in diplomatic controversies with Oriental powers.

Excerpts from the Democratic Party Platform of 1900 further evidence exactly how Bryan felt about ethnic minorities and their inclusion in American society:

- The Filipinos cannot be citizens without endangering our civilization;
- We favor the continuance and strict enforcement of the Chinese exclusion law, and its application to the same classes of all Asiatic races.

There are many who would propose that the blatantly xenophobic policies voiced in the Democratic Party platforms of these three years are a reflection on the general populous and the times. This would also be historically incorrect, and Darrow's biting criticism are a prime rebuttal of such notions. Bryan's contemporaries were not as disposed to racial exclusionism as Bryan was. In order to get an understanding of the extreme nature of Bryan's views, all one has to do is consult the "Chinese Exclusion" chapter from William Jennings Bryan's own book published in 1907 titled "The Old World and Its Ways":

If every American could visit China, the question of Chinese immigration would soon be settled upon a permanent basis, for no one can become acquainted with the Chinese coolie without

recognizing the impossibility of opening the doors of our country to him without injustice to our own laboring men, demoralization to our social ideas, injury to China's reputation among us and danger to our diplomatic relations with that country. (Pg. 137 -- Written for Success Magazine, April, 1906)

The official position of William Jennings Bryan, must be gauged against that of the Republicans in the same years in order to test the excuse that the inherent anti-immigrant stance displayed in the Democratic Party platform was a reflection of the rest of America. It is important to note that the Republican Party platform of these years makes no mention of excluding the Chinese, or anyone else on the basis of "race" for that matter. Furthermore, one of the key elements of the Republican platform is its position on enforcing the rights of African Americans, whereas the Democratic Party makes no mention of African American rights. The party platforms of both parties address policy towards the pensions of the Union veterans, evidencing that the divisions of the American Civil War were still vividly in the minds of partisans. All of these differences that may seem awkward to modern sensibilities are easily comprehended once it is recalled that the Democrats of this era were called "Dixiecrats," and were the party that represented the views of a Jim Crow South. Politics in the United States between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I cannot be understood without taking into account the lingering divisions, namely because its key political figures are the children of Civil War veterans, mostly born during the conflict or the bitter Reconstruction.

Note the drastic difference in attitudes towards racial minorities by the contemporary Republican Party Platform of 1906:

- Rights of the Negro -- The Republican party has been for more than fifty years the consistent friend of the American Negro. It gave him freedom and citizenship. It wrote into the organic law the declarations that proclaim his civil and political rights, and it believes to-day that his noteworthy progress in intelligence, industry and good citizenship has earned the respect and encouragement of the nation. We **demand equal justice for all men, without regard to**

**race or color; we declare once more, and without reservation, for the enforcement in letter and spirit of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments to the Constitution which were designed for the protection and advancement of the negro, and we condemn all devices that have for their real aim his disfranchisement for reasons of color alone, as unfair, un-American and repugnant to the Supreme law of the land.**

- We believe that the native inhabitants of Porto Rico should be at once collectively made citizens of the United States, and that all others properly qualified under existing laws residing in said island should have the privilege of becoming naturalized. [sic]

William Jennings Bryan was the political candidate where both the “farmer” and the “populist” coincided. His Democratic Party mostly represented the vanquished rural South, and the stance against the capitalist was decidedly against the bankers and industrialists of the North. Present day “socialists” are unsure of how to remember William Jennings Bryan, as his involvement with the “fundamentalist” side of the Scope’s Trial confuses them into believing Bryan was a conservative. Nothing could be further from the truth and the way Bryan is remembered typically hinges on whether he is being remembered for his participation in the Scope’s Trial or for the anti-urban “Cross of Gold” speech, which is now dear to populists, socialists and all the reformer types alike. Consider Jack Lessenberry in his August 24, 2011, online article website titled “Long live socialism! The great right-wing swindle has hoodwinked too many” that Lessenberry wrote for The Smirking Chimp: “Here is the truth: I love socialism and so do you.” He then proceeds to elaborate the long list of socialists both we supposedly admire:

19th Century progressives and socialists, many, but by no means all, Christian, who did not necessarily believe in total government ownership of all property but believed that government should be used to structure a better society, are the ones responsible for the programs we commonly (and correctly in its true sense) refer to as “socialist.” **They include the great William Jennings Bryan; Francis Bellamy**, vice president of

the Christian Society of Socialists and cousin to the founder of ‘Nationalism’, Edward Bellamy, and author of the “Pledge of Allegiance,” which Bellamy penned as a protest of the corporate corrupting of our democratic republic.

Jack Lessenberry is hardly the only socialist that correlates William Jennings Bryan with Edward Bellamy’s utopian socialism. In fact, Bryan’s “Cross of Gold” speech is pointed to as an outcropping of Bellamy’s utopian novel, “Looking Backward,” in the year 2000 reprint of the novel. The 2000 incantation of “Looking Backward” cites the relationship between Bellamy and William Jennings Bryan in the Preface. This is of note, as Bellamy’s novel has explicitly eugenic ideals extrapolated throughout its volume:

We can see a good example of Bellamy’s direct influence on national politics in the way William Jennings Bryan campaigned for president. At the 1896 Democratic convention, speaking for his “free silver” policies, he challenged his opponents with an electrifying slogan: “Thou shalt not crucify mankind on a cross of gold.”

Later speeches have Bryan directly rallying against the imperialism he saw as iconic of President McKinley’s administration. Bryan exposed the eugenic side to his anti-imperialism stance. He opposed any imperialistic foreign policy in the Philippines by objecting to a multi-racial United States:

Imperialism is the policy of an empire. And **an empire is a nation composed of different races**, living under varying forms of government. A republic cannot be an empire, for a republic rests upon the theory that the government derive their powers from the consent of the governed and colonialism violates this theory. **We do not want the Filipinos for citizens.** They cannot, without danger to us, share in the government of our nation and moreover, **we cannot afford to add another race question to the race questions which we already have.** -- “Speeches of William Jennings Bryan,” Michigan State University Voice Library. Audio version available on the CD-ROM Who Built America?, 1876-1914, by the American Social History Project.

“Philippine-American War, 1899-1902,” by Arnaldo Dumindin, documents that attitudes about race divided the anti-imperialists. According to

Dumindin, some opposed annexation because they did not want a “primitive race” to join the United States. Others, including many African Americans, suggested that United States talk of “uplifting” the Filipinos was hypocritical; at home, they argued, the United States was not even trying to protect the rights of black citizens. Some people feared that Germany or another European power might get the Philippines if the United States did not. Newspapers had painted the Filipinos as primitive “savages”; consequently, many Americans came to believe they could not govern themselves or defend themselves against Germany. In the chapter titled “Oppose Colonialism” in William Jennings Bryan’s “The Commoner Condensed” of 1903, Bryan further underscores his fear of having the United States assume another population:

The **race question which we have in the South** will sink into insignificance in comparison with the race question that we will have to meet in the Philippines if we give them a territorial form of government and **attempt to ensure white supremacy.**

In this book, Bryan also attacked Theodore Roosevelt’s tolerance for prejudice in the North by defending the bigotry of the South:

The question is, why does the president refuse to apply the same rule in the north that he does in the South? He respects the prejudices of white republicans in the north, but he takes occasion to lecture white democrats in the South for entertaining the same prejudices where the conditions are such as to make those prejudices stronger.

More poignantly, Bryan’s racialist wanderings fell right in line with the eugenicists of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, endlessly obsessing over “the negro question,” the “yellow peril” and other “race questions” as eugenicists on both sides of the Atlantic posed:

In an article on “The Yellow Peril” he said that exclusion should be extended to the Japanese if they did not voluntarily limit emigration, and he added that the immigration of Filipinos “involves the same menace to our country.”

In 1901, for instance, there appeared in *The Commoner* a long editorial on “The Negro Question.” The occasion for the editorial was the recent invitation of President Theodore

Roosevelt to Booker T. Washington to dine at the White House, which, said Bryan, “was unfortunate, to say the least. It will give depth and acrimony to a race feeling already strained to the uttermost.

Another part of Bryan’s history as a progressive-minded politician intent on establishing the vision of Edward Bellamy’s “Looking Backward” as social reality is his promotion of planned communities. Bryan had a small but profitable gig promoting a “garden city” utopia. When Bryan moved to Miami, Florida in 1913, he filled lucrative speaking engagements, including playing the part of spokesman for George E. Merrick’s new planned community Coral Gables, by addressing large crowds at the Venetian Pool. The Venetian Pool, just down the street from the luxurious Biltmore Hotel, and all of the canals carved into Coral Gables were initially part of a utopian “garden city” plan that would have students of the University of Miami campus in Coral Gables ferrying to class in gondolas.

Beyond that, Bryan threw himself into the work of the Social Gospel and all of its desires to regulate the social lives of the population. Bryan served on organizations containing a large number of theological liberals – like many of the eugenic faithful, he sat on the temperance committee of the Federal Council of Churches. In 1899, Bryan founded a weekly magazine, “*The Commoner*,” calling on Democrats to dissolve the trusts, regulate the railroads more tightly, and support the Progressive Movement. In line with ideas proposed by Edward Bellamy and Leonard Darwin, the famous eugenicist son of Charles Darwin, Bryan also tentatively called for “nationalization” of the railroads for a period of his political career.

Jim Peron is the Executive Director of the Institute for Liberal Values, the editor of the book “*The Liberal Tide*,” and the author of the book “*The Road Not Taken: Resolving the Crisis on the Roads*.” Peron wrote an online article titled “The Rise, Fall, and Resurrection of the Religious Right” for the Institute for Liberal Values in New Zealand. In it, Peron charts the trajectory from agricultural populism to religious Progressivism, which William Jennings Bryan embodied. From this perspective, Bryan is not just a Populist, but the political figure in which the transformation from Confederate Democrat to Progressive Democrat took shape at the turn of the

century:

The first major religiously oriented widespread political movement was the Progressive-Populist campaign of the late 1800s. -- The Populists found their White Knight in the person of William Jennings Bryan. He was a hard-core **fundamentalist**, the voice of populist socialism and a frequent presidential candidate for the Democratic Party and the People's Party. Fundamentalists didn't have problems with this combination. -- As Bryan himself explained it the basic principle of his Fundamentalist movement was: "**The right of the community is superior to the right of any individual.**" Collectivism was the hallmark of the Populists. They were in love with state control of the economy and of man's social life.

The peak of this tension between two sides of "socialism" finally came to a boil during the Scope's Monkey Trial when William Jennings Bryan was chosen to defend the Progressive-Fundamentalist side, not a "conservative" Fundamentalist side, as he is typically portrayed. This show trial was truly two sides of the same socialist coin, battling for the future of Progressivism, socialism, and what is now defined as "liberal Democrats." The trial had been engineered to be a show trial from the beginning by the hands of H.L. Mencken, and it was through this show trial that Mencken effectively dislodged the "fundamentalist" side of Progressivism from its "socialist" element. It posed two champions of what is now clearly in the camp of "leftist" ideology to argue the issue that Francis Bellamy had begun decades earlier in his proposal that all schools be "nationalized" in the overall effort towards "socialism." This was nothing new. Edward and Francis Bellamy had joined fundamental "Christian" values with "socialism" to create a "Christian Socialist" movement based upon Edward Bellamy's "nationalist" and "socialist" philosophy. William Jennings Bryan was the first real Presidential candidate to incorporate the ideas of Bellamy into national politics, and this tension between the "fundamentalist" and "secularist" sides of socialism endured through the Progressive era until the Monkey Trial which divorced them forever. Peron provides quotes that would lend weight to this view:

The tide was clearly turning against the Bryans of the world. The secular socialists cheered Darrow and pretended to have forgotten that Bryan was

one of their own. He was a man who championed their causes and promoted their theories. But for many American's he was now a senile buffoon, an object of earned ridicule.

The "socialists" like the Bellamy had promised a utopia free from social contaminants. This philosophy evolved into the "social hygiene" wing of the eugenics movement, which German National Socialists readily adopted in their all-out war on tobacco and liquor as polluters of the nation's "germ-plasm."

Posterity remembers William Jennings Bryan as staunchly on the opposing side of science. Far from being the representative of anti-science fundamentalism, William Jennings Bryan was distinctly sympathetic to the cause of science, and not at all opposed to it as the mythos of the Scopes Trial suggests. Williams Jennings Bryan joined the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1924. (Pg. 13 - "The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design," Ronald L. Numbers, Univ. of Ca., 2006) The American Association for the Advancement of Science is a non-profit organization with the stated goals of promoting cooperation among scientists, defending scientific freedom, encouraging scientific responsibility, and supporting scientific education and science outreach for the betterment of all humanity. It is the world's largest general scientific society and is the publisher of the well-known scientific journal "Science." James Gilbert documents this curious aspect of Scopes Monkey Trial in the chapter entitled "William Jennings Bryan, Scientist":

But the larger question is, why did Bryan join the AAAS in 1924? What was his motivation in pledging membership to the largest and most reputable scientific organization in the United States and one known, incidentally, for its vocal support of evolution theory? Quite clearly the answer has nothing to do with a run-up to the Scopes trial. The Tennessee antievolution law that created the case did not pass until the spring of 1925, well after he secured his membership. Neither the American Civil Liberties Union nor John Scopes had yet imagined initiating a test case for Darwinism. The explanation lies instead in taking seriously Bryan's assumption that he was, on his own terms at least, a scientist. Doing so reveals the sort of science to which he committed his soul and how, perhaps, millions of

other Americans understood science.

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One of the most pointed of his testimonies came when he addressed the state legislature of West Virginia on 13 April 1923 as an expert witness on evolution theory and modern science. He repaid the attentive legislators with an extended lesson in chemistry. For his text Bryan took an interpretation of the second law of thermodynamics that appeared to nullify any possible natural evolution toward more complex life forms. (Pg. 27, "Redeeming Culture: American Religion in an Age of Science", University of Chicago Press, 2008)

As such, contrary to Scopes Monkey mythos, Bryan was not nearly as much of a fundamentalist as many modern-day creationists, and was more accurately described as a "day-age creationist": "William Jennings Bryan, the much misunderstood leader of the post-World War I antievolution crusade, not only read the Mosaic "days" as geological "ages" but allowed for the possibility of organic evolution - so long as it did not impinge on the supernatural origin of Adam and Eve." (Pg. 13 - "The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design," Ronald L. Numbers, Univ. of Ca., 2006) Needless to say, this is not the position of a fundamentalist or literal interpretation of Christian theology.

More to the point, Bryan served as Secretary of State under the Progressive and pro-eugenics radical, Woodrow Wilson. (Pg. 13 - "The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design," Ronald L. Numbers, Univ. of Ca., 2006) Both Wilson's and Bryan's wives were part of the leadership of the National Society for the Promotion of Practical Eugenics. (Pg. 46 - "Three Generations no Imbeciles", Paul A. Lombardo, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2008) William Jennings Bryan was also a devout Methodist during an era when the Methodist Church was intertwined with the American eugenics movement. If the architects of the Scopes Trial wanted to find someone to represent the Fundamentalist Christian view, or more precisely, defend the law that nothing else other than the "Story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible," as the law explicitly stipulated, then Bryan was not the best choice. The fact that he never once attacked the

insidious eugenic views expounded in "Hunter's Civic Biology" proves that he was not opposed to the teaching of Darwinian theories of sexual selection and evolutionary hierarchies or Darwin's Theory as it specifically applied to mankind; the core argument as was advertised by the show trial's promoters.

These facts go a long way towards understanding why William Jennings Bryan would not and could not attack Darwinism and the "eugenic" topics in the very textbook the Scope's Monkey Trial were litigating over. William Jennings Bryan, and his wife, were advocates of eugenics and segregation, and viewed the world through the lens of race hierarchy. Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and Mrs. William Jennings Bryan were leaders of the National Society for the Promotion of Practical Eugenics. (Pg. 46 - "Three Generations, No Imbeciles," Paul Lombardo)

## CONCLUSION:

A March 1, 1997, article in "Science News", the child publication of the Washington D.C. Science Service, provides a *mea culpa* and an open admission of the prejudice with which the publication has treated the role of science in politically sensitive topics. "From News Wire to Newsweekly: 75 years of Science Service" by Anna Maria Gillis admits fault in the fact that the biased coverage of the Scopes Trial led the way for its uncritical coverage of eugenics later:

In its early days, Science Service did not always display the objectivity so prized in journalism today. The service clearly breached the objectivity barrier in 1925 during the trial of John Scopes, who challenged a Tennessee law that forbade the teaching of evolution. Science Service staffers Davis and Frank Thone went to Tennessee to cover the trial that summer, filing dispatches that went into daily newspapers and SCIENCE NEWS LETTER. At the same time, Science Service was helping Clarence Darrow's defense team gather expert witnesses to testify on Scopes' behalf. After Scopes lost, Science Service raised funds for tuition so the teacher could continue his education. ---- Throughout the 1920s, SCIENCE NEWS LETTER included extensive and uncritical coverage of eugenics, a favorite topic of many scientists and journalists at the time, including Davis, who was a member of the board of the American Eugenics Society. The January 19, 1924, issue described a report of the Eugenics Committee of the United States that

favored the immigration of northwestern over southeastern Europeans. "Will Blending of Races Produce Super-men?" dominated the November 26, 1927, issue. Based on the comments of a geneticist at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, the article discussed, most often in negative terms, offspring of various mixed ancestries. Slosson wrote that the public needed to understand that "the fate of the nation depends . . . on how they combine their chromosomes. (p. S10)

Consider the implications of this bias. Historians have written the history of the Scope's Monkey Trial as a showdown between conservatives and liberals. This view of history forgets who William Jennings Bryan represented as a politician. This fictitious and overly simplistic view also served to obfuscate what side Clarence Darrow truly stood for. The result was a distinct win for the International eugenics movement. It provided not just cover, but acceptance for views Darrow and other prominent Liberals of the era clearly knew to be not just unscientific, but dangerous. The result was the indoctrination of several generations of America's youth into the dictates of eugenic theory, the ideology at the core of Hitler's National Socialism.

#### ORIGINS OF THE EXCERPT:

This paper is derived from the research conducted for the first two volumes of The Eugenics Anthology. It extends the contents of the books, as I felt it went outside of their scope. – A.E. Samaan

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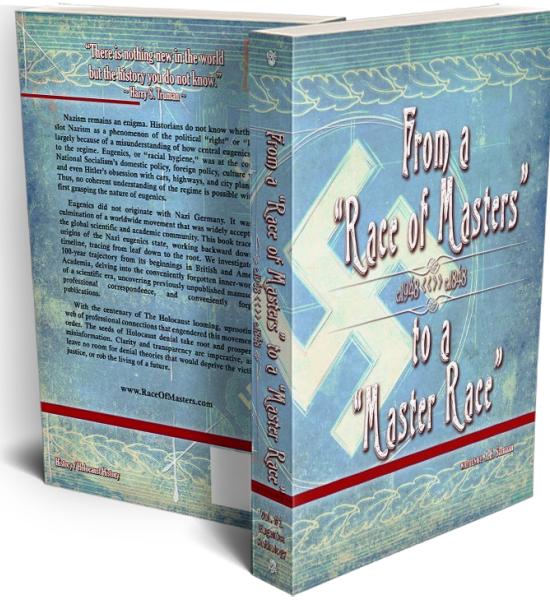
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